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ABSTRACT The language teacher automatically teaches culture when he teaches language, but there are many ways in which the Italian teacher can specifically bring culture to the Italian classroom. Through use of vocabulary certain differences in culture can be made clear to students. Dialogues should be used to reveal major areas of contrast and similarity between the two cultures. Slides may be used to tell anecdotes (about famous Italians, for example) followed by a listening comprehension question. Proverbs, if used carefully, can give new insights into the values of Italian society. Native speakers can be used in the classroom as catalysts in discussions which bring out cultural differences. Students may have personal contact with native speakers by means of international correspondence; they can exchange letters of perhaps tapes. Teachers should collect articles and illustrative material, including cartoons and advertisements, from Italian magazines and newspapers. Slides and filmstrips provide and excellent element and should be used to emphasize various aspects of Italian life, while the film is perhaps the best vivid medium of presentation. Songs are a great help for the acquisition of both linguistic and cultural knowledge. Lastly, maps can be sued to teach Italian geography. Also discussed are Nelson Brooks' list of concepts that are central to the analysis of a culture - symbolism, value, authority, order, ceremony, love, honor, humor, beauty and spirit. (Author/CFM)

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ITALIAN CULTURE THROUGH AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

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Formerly, the word *culture* was limited to the intellectual content of a civilization - the fine arts, the humanities, the broad movements of science, as opposed to the technical, useful knowledge which people produced. More recently, culture has taken a much broader meaning including almost all human activity of a people - their way of life, their manners, sports, customs, and so on. Nelson Brooks and Howard Nostrand, who have spent years in such study, briefly summarize it thus: "It is the aspect of the people's way of life." For the cultural anthropologists, culture is the ensemble of traditions, uses, habits, beliefs and values, which mold the attitudes and the conduct of a people in diverse circumstances. Eduard Harriot, a French politician and writer said, "La culture c'est ce qu'il reste quand on a tout oublié."

Language and culture are inseparable. To teach one automatically means to teach the other. For example, the simple greeting, *Buon giorno. Come sta?* is a sincere concern about one's health, not a mere form of greeting. Furthermore, the use of the pronoun *Lei*, understood in the verb form *sta*, also indicates the degree of intimacy. These greetings learned during the pre-textbook phase contain cultural data which are integral with language. For example, the inevitable concomitant of teaching the forms of address is teaching the social customs and situations which determine the use of one form rather than another. The very rules for using the forms of address afford cultural insights as to the psychology of the Italian people, their attitudes of respect for elders and strangers, their sensitivity to nuances of speech reflecting family relationships, degrees of intimacy, and differences of age and social status. All of these insights represent cultural data which are taught integrally with linguistic skills.

An English-speaking person uttering the same greeting in English would disconcert the Italian speaker: the English-speaking did not accompany the greeting with a handshake and the Italian not only would wonder why his acquaintance, having made a query about his health, has not waited for a reply but also would consider him indifferent to his welfare and brusque in personal relations.

Respect for one's education is also reflected in the use of titles. The title *dottore* for example is given to anyone who has successfully

completed a university degree and may be used with or without a surname. The same applies to such professions as *professore, ingegnere, avvocato,* and so forth. With the exception of *dottore* and *professore*, it is impossible to give a parallel translation of *Buon giorno, avvocato* or *Buon giorno, avvocato Rossi* which stresses not only admiration but also respect and social class distinction.

The teacher should be well aware that just as there are points of interference between two languages that impede learning, so there are points of interference between cultures that impede understanding. It is extremely important to tell students at the very outset and to remind them unceasingly, that the Italian culture is not inferior to their own, nor is it superior. It is simply itself, with its own values, its own way of thinking. It is unique, as is each culture.

The teacher should make every attempt to dispel from the English-speaking student's mind the stereotype image he may have of the Italians. Too often they have been portrayed as a spaghetti-eating, Chianti-drinking people. Too often they have been presented as leaders in organized crime or as *mafiosi*. Too often they have been depicted as rowing a gondola in Venice's canals endlessly singing *O sole mio*. These conceptions are often derived from hearsay, resting either upon pure imagination or loosely interpreted facts rather than from a direct contact, properly evaluated with the nationality concerned. Just as the Father protests against his step-daughter's conception of him in Pirandello's

Six characters in search of an author, "it would be an atrocious injustice to judge us by one action alone, as if all our existence were summoned up in that one deed."

It is important not only to reject false clichés but to learn instead cultural content that is authentic. The teacher who loves the Italian language and the culture it reflects may be sorely tempted to present the more pleasing aspects of the Italian culture and to neglect or completely ignore those characteristics that are not quite so pleasant. This, while understandable and often indulged in, will not represent a complete, well-rounded view of the Italian culture to the student and will actually hinder the development of cross-cultural understanding.

I shall discuss briefly several items and show how all these can contribute in bringing culture to the Italian classroom.

Vocabulary

The cultural content and the connotations of the words and idioms selected for teaching will have to be made clear to the students. Where words seem to correspond lexically in their denotation, they may well diverge considerably in their connotation or the emotional association which they arouse. The mere mention of wine at table, an examination, or whistling at a football game - frequent occurrences - involves cultural differences which, if ignored, are understood by the student in the cultural meaning of his native patterns, and therefore misunderstood.

Wine at table, for example, might be understood by the Canadian student to imply a special occasion, when it does not have that implication in Italian. An examination usually means a written exercise to the Canadian, but to the Italian student, it may be an oral confrontation with several professors. Compare the expression *to write an exam* with the British *to sit an exam* and the Italian *dare un esame*. Similarly, a political canditate *runs for an election* in Canada, *stands for an election* in Britain and *si presenta alle elezioni* in Italy. Whistling which indicates approval and admiration in Canada, is used for disapproval and censure in Italy. The exclamation *Perbacco!* might indicate the Italians are more fond to invoke the god of wine rather than Jove, the more austere king of the gods. For effective communications, we must teach cultural content with the language.

Dialogues

Dialogues in a wide variety of situations as is feasible should cover major areas of contrast and similarity between the two cultures. Authors should make sure that such dialogues are constructed around an experience, compatible with the age and interests of the student; the language should not become pedantic or unreal. The teacher should clarify some of the cultural content, otherwise the student will assume that what is said and done are the same as in his own culture. The student will learn by comparison and contrast a great deal about his own culture as he strives to understand the culture of the speakers of the language he is being taught. Examine, for example, the opening dialogue of *Basic Italian*

which, instead of promoting cultural understanding, does, in fact, suggest cultural misunderstanding.

Studenti[1]

Sig. na Evans: Buon giorno, signorina Jones, come sta?*
Sig. na Jones: Bene, grazie, e Lei?
Sig. na Evans: Molto bene, grazie. Dov'è Luisa?
Sig. na Jones: Luisa è a scuola.
Sig. na Evans: E Carlo dov'è?
Sig. na Jones: Carlo è a casa con lo zio.
Sig. na Evans: Mario dov'è?
Sig. na Jones: Ecco Mario.
Sig. na Evans: Arriverderla, signorina.*
Mario: Buon giorno, signorina Evans.
Sig. na Evans: Buon giorno, Mario.
Mario: Come sta, signorina?*
Sig. na Evans: Bene, grazie, e Lei?
Mario: Molto bene, grazie. Dov'è Carlo?
Sig. na Evans: Carlo è a casa con lo zio?
Mario: Ecco il professore. Arriverderla, signorina.*
Sig. na Evans: Buon giorno.

If a dialogue is transferred on to a transparency, the transparency can serve as a cue card and the students will be able to accompany the dialogue with suitable gestures. (The lines marked with an asterisk obviously are to be accompanied by shaking hands.)

The teacher may transfer the names of *Sig. na Evans*, *Sig. na Jones* and *Mario* on a static overlay and provide the *Sig.na Evans'* dialogue on one overlay and *Sig. na Jones'* and *Mario's* on another. Students should be encouraged to act out the short skit.

If students are well trained to act out *prepared* dialogues, they may eventually be asked to act out "situation" dialogues. Situation dialogues

1. Charles Speroni and Carlo L. Golino, *Basic Italian*. Third edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), p. 1.

may be written to supplement or complement any of the dialogues presented in the basic program. The following or a similar dialogue may be used in Lesson 8 of *Basic Italian*, "Una telefonata."

Marco deve dare un esame domani e decide di rimanere in casa a studiare questa sera. Un suo amico, Carlo, gli telefona.

Carlo: Pronto! Marco, vuoi andare al cinema questa sera?
Marco:
Carlo: Cosa farai a casa?
Marco:
Carlo: Ma sei il più bravo della classe!
Marco:
Carlo: Allora hai proprio deciso di studiare?
Marco:

Dialogues of this nature using vocabulary and structures already mastered by the student should be used from time to time to provide additional *variety* in the Italian classroom.

Teachers should make sure that such dialogues are constructed around an experience, compatible with the age and interests of the student; the language should not become unreal or pedantic. Cultural content, if any, should be clarified, otherwise the student will assume that what is said and done are the same as in his own culture. The student will learn by comparison and contrast a great deal about his culture as he strives to understand the culture of the speakers of the language he is learning.

Taped anecdotes or dialogues can illustrate "cultural" characteristics which are peculiarly Italian. The following scene should give the student an insight to the Italian way of life and make him realize that -

alas! - ordering a glass of wine or a cup of coffee in Italy may not be as easy as it seems! The anecdote might be used to supplement the *lettura* "A un bar" in Lesson 14 of *Basic Italian*.

Il barista pignolo[2]

Un signore entra in un bar e chiede al barista:

Cliente: Vorrei un bicchiere di vino, per favore.

Barista: Bianco o rosso?

Cliente: Rosso.

Barista: Dolce o secco?

Cliente: Secco.

Barista: Locale o di marca?

Cliente: Locale.

Barista: Di fiasco o di bottiglia?

Cliente: Non importa. Se sapevo she ci voleva tanto tempo avrei ordinato un caffé?

Barista: Allora vuole un caffé?

Cliente: Ma si, me dia un caffé.

Barista: Nero o macchiato?

Cliente: Nero!

Barista: Ristretto o alto?

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2. Leonora Fabbri, *Divertenti storie italiane* (London: George G. Harrap and Co., 1968), p. 11. Reproduced by kind permission of the author.
For an excellent discussion on strategies, see Robert J. Di Pietro, "Speech Protocols and Verbal Strategies and Speech Protocols in the Teaching of Italian," *The Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes*, 32, No. 1 (October 1975), 24-38.

Cliente: Ristretto.

Barista: Corretto o semplice?

A questo punto il signore scappa disperato.

Students might be encouraged to act out the scene; the *cliente's* lines may be omitted while the *barista's* lines may serve as cue; the *barista's* lines may be omitted and the *cliente's* lines may serve as cue; or both the *barista's* and the *cliente's* lines are omitted and students are asked to provide a suitable dialogue.

Italians have always been great story-tellers and they particularly delight themselves in relating anecdotes about famous men. Slides and a taperecording of the anecdote may combine to provide a useful source for aural/visual presentation.

I due crocifissi

Donatello (*Slide: Head of Donatello*) aveva scolpito con molta fatica un crocifisso di legno per la chiesa di Santa Croce (*Slide: Church of Santa Croce*). Ne era assai soddisfatto e lo volle mostrare al suo grande amico Filippo Brunelleschi.

- E' una cosa stupenda! Lo troverai più vero del vero. L'altro, impaziente di ammirare siffatto capolavoro, non si fece pregare quando l'amico andò a prenderlo a casa. I due si avviarono verso la chiesa (*Slide: Interior of Church of Santa Croce*).

Brunelleschi esaminò attentamente il crocifisso e poi sorrise deluso. (*Slide: Wooden Crucifix by Donatello*). Donatello vide subito che quel sorriso gli torceva la bocca come per una smorfietta e corrugò le ciglia:

- Dimmi francamente, che te ne pare? (*Slide: Wooden Crucifix by Donatello, detail*) Filippo, che era sincerissimo, rispose subito:

- Mi pare che tu abbia messo in croce un contadino.

Lo scultore si sentì mordere da quelle parole e scattò inviperito:

- Se fosse così facile fare come criticare, il mio Cristo non ti parrebbe un contadino. Provati a scolpirne uno e ne riparleremo.

Brunelleschi, salutato freddamente l'amico, se ne tornò a casa. Ma l'indomani, senza che nessuno lo sapesse, cominciò a scolpire un crocifisso di legno. Vi lavorò con impegno per parecchi mesi volendo che la statua riuscisse perfetta.

Quando fu finito, invitò Donatello a desinare. S' incamminarono verso il mercato dove Filippo comprò frutta, uova e formaggio.

- Porta questo a casa mia - disse al compagno. - Devo comprare ancora qualche cosuccia.

Donatello va, entra, fa due passi nel corridoio, apre la porta della prima stanza e caccia un grido di stupefazione (*Slide: Wooden Crucifix by Brunelleschi in S. Maria Novella*). Un

crocifisso di straordinaria bellezza spicca sulla parete bianca, accanto alla finestra, in piena luce. Come fuor di sè dalla meraviglia, lo scultore allarga le braccia... e le uova e il formaggio e tutta la roba da mangiare si spiaccica sul pavimento.

Quando Brunelleschi tornò, gridò verso l'amico:

- Come faremo a mangiare se hai rovinato tutto?

L'altro gli si gettò al collo e disse piangendo:

- Sei più bravo di me. A te è concesso di fare i Cristi, a me i contadini.[3]

Slides may be used to tell or narrate anecdotes followed by a listening comprehension question.

Once the anecdote is read twice, a student may be required to answer a question based on what he has heard. As a more challenging exercise, the student may be required to narrate it or to re-write it in his own words while the teacher assists him by showing at intervals the various slides which act as cue to the chronological order of events.

Michelangelo (*Slide: Head of Michelangelo*) come voi sapete, fece la famosa statua di Mosè (*Slide: S. Pietro in Vincoli, Tomb of Julius II*). Quando l'ebbe finita (*Slide: Statue of Moses*) egli la guardò a lungo, ed era così soddisfatto della sua opera (*Slide: Moses, detail*) che, preso un martello, diede un colpo alle ginocchia della statua (*Slide: Moses, detail showing knee*).

3. *Piccole storie di grandi artisti*, adapted by R. Garrus (Paris: Didier, n.d.).

Poi esclamò:

- Perché non parli? (*Slide: Statue of Moses*)

Ciò voleva dire che alla statua non mancava altro che la parola per essere viva.[4]

Ripeto.

Michelangelo, come voi sapete.....viva.

Perché Michelangelo non era completamente contento?

The Student's answer sheet will look somewhat like this:

1. A. perché la statua era di marmo. 1. A B C D

B. perché la statua non parlava.

C. perché non aveva finito di fare la statua.

D. perché diede un colpo di martello alla statua.

Proverbs

If used carefully, proverbs can give new insights into the values of Italian society. Distrust and fear are illustrated in proverbs like *La diffidenza è la madre della sicurtà*, and *L'uomo scottato ha paura del fuoco*. The emphasis on individualism is underscored by such sayings as *Ognuno per sè, e Dio per tutti*. The stress on intelligence is seen in such proverbs as *Intendere è potere*. Their caustic spirit is reflected in *Dopo la morte non val medicina*. The Italian delight in balance and harmony is illustrated in many proverbs whose form is based on balanced structure, *Ai mali estremi, estremi rimedi; Chi più ha, più desidera; Il peccare è da uomini, l'ostinarsi è da bestia*. The habit of taking a nap

4. Michael Cagno, *Exercise Book for Italian, Level II* (New York: S. F. Vanni, n.d.), p. 9. Reproduced by kind permission of the author.

after a meal is stated in *Dopo pranzo riposar un poco, dopo cena passeggiar un miglio.* Particularly in central and southern Italy, during the summer months it is customary to take a nap between 2:00 and 4:00 in the afternoon. During these two hours it would be useless to go out shopping; all stores would be closed. The tourist not accustomed to the *siesta* will only find churches and museums open.

It should be emphasized, however, that proverbs should not be quoted to "prove" that a cultural theme exists. Proverbs may be introduced to underscore an existing characteristic. The teacher may suggest that the characteristic probably exists and that the proverb illustrates it in a way that is easy to remember.

One further example: *pigliare due piccioni con una fava* and *To kill two birds with one stone* would indicate that the English proverb's objective is to get the action done as quickly and as efficiently as possible. The Italian proverb seems to be more interested in the process; efficiency is not its primary concern. There is a definite use of time in the English, a casual use in the Italian. Those who have travelled in Italy know that haste and punctuality may not be a characteristic of many Italians.

In the following exercises, the student will be asked to match the English equivalent of Column B with the Italian proverb in Column A.[5]

5. A good source is Jerzy Gluski, comp. and ed., *A Comparative Book of English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Russian Proverbs with a Latin Appendix* (Amsterdam/London/New York: Elsevier Publishing Co., 1971).

Colonna A	Colonna B
1. Il lupo cambia il pelo ma non il vizio.	a. *The early bird catches the worm*
2. Meglio un uovo oggi che una gallina domani	b. *Don't count your chickens before they're hatched*
3. Chi dorme non piglia pesci	c. *A burned child dreads the fire*
4. L'occhio del padrone fa ingrassare il cavallo	d. *Old habits die hard*
5. Non vendere la pelle dell'orso prima di averlo preso	e. *A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*
6. Chiudere la stalla quando sono scappati i buoi	f. *There is honour among thieves*
7. Cane non mangia cane	g. *Things prosper when the master keeps an eye on them himself*
8. Dove l'asino è cascato una volta, non ci casca più	h. *Turn and turnabout*
9. Fare d'una mosca un elefante	i. *To make a mountain out of a molehill*
10. Una volta corre il cane e un'altra la lepre	j. *To shut the stable-door after the horse is gone*

"Chrystallized" sayings might also be introduced to show that there is a higher "level" of language. Here the student will be asked to match the Italian idiomatic expression with its Italian synonym or explanation.

Colonna A	Colonna B
1. in bocca al lupo	a. irritare chi potrebbe nuocere

2. salvar capra e cavoli	b. compagnia composta di poche persone
3. il calcio dell'asino	c. di sfuggita, rapidamente
4. stuzzicare il can che dorme	d. qui è la difficoltà
	e. auguri!
5. essere come cani e gatti	f. essere fuori d'ogni pericolo, d'ogni difficoltà
6. topo di biblioteca	
7. mangiare come un canarino	g. soddisfare a due condizioni apparentemente contraddittorie
8. essere quattro gatti	h. mangiare pochissimo
9. non sapere che pesci pigliare	i. c'è sotto qualche malizia o inganno
	j. ingratitudine
10. cavallo di battaglia	k. trovarsi in continua discordia
11. essere a cavallo	l. non sapere come risolvere una situazione
12. a volo d'uccello	
13. fare d'una mosca un elefante	m. persona che passa tutto il giorno sui libri
	n. ciò che un artista eseguisce più volentieri perché in esso mostra meglio la sua abilità
14. gatta ci cova	
15. qui casca l'asino	o. esagerare

Native speakers

Since there are practically no Italian classes with the absent of native speakers, the teacher should use them as catalysts in discussions which bring out cultural differences. Particularly since the native

speaker is of the same age as the students, they can ask him about the activities and interests of their counterparts in the foreign environment. Basic differences and similarities would emerge. In a Canadian family for example, there is a great concern for children when they are young, but once they are grown, they can go where they like and do as they wish. In the Italian family, the individual is part of the whole big family, as a child, as an adult, and as an old person. Children are included in parties and celebrations; so are old people. The Anglo-Saxon world seems to be divided into adults and children. Italians do not seem to make that distinction.

Inevitably, the native speaker would also point out the Italians' strict moral code, although parental rules differ in different parts of Italy.

Pen Pals, Tape Pals

When the native speaker is not available, every student may have personal contact with him by means of international correspondence. More can be learned about life of the speakers of the language in this way than from many hours of formal instruction. Teachers should encourage their students to correspond with Italian students as soon as they are able to put together a simple written account of their doings. Better than "pen pals" might be "tape pals." Since regular and cassette taperecorders are quite readily available, students might be encouraged to exchange tapes.

Pictorial materials

Unfortunately for Italian, there is a dearth of illustrative material available from publishers. The teacher will be compelled to collect these from the available wealth of Italian magazines and newspapers. In doing so, it is obvious that caution must be exercised: pictures should depict natural situations, life as it really is; illustrative material caricaturing the life of the people or presenting a false cliché should be avoided. Teachers will also have to resist the temptation of choosing pictures with the picturesque element. People in national or regional costumes no longer worn may be a source of considerable misunderstanding.

Magazine pictures

Since illustrative materials are not available from publishers, the teacher will have to rely on some Airline companies for large posters and from the wealth of Italian magazines and newspapers for smaller ones. The resourceful teacher can easily obtain a copy of *Italia*,[6] a thirty-two page profusely and beautifully illustrated booklet, available from Enit, which describes both pictorially and in print the beauties of Italy. These pictures can be cut out from the booklet, mounted on coloured art paper and posted on the bulletin board for display. If sufficient pictures are available, the teacher may want to focus on different cities

6. ENIT, *Italia* (Japan: Toppan Printing Co. Ltd., n.d.). ENIT has offices in both Canada (3 Place Ville Marie, Suite 22, Montréal, Québec) and in the United States (300 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois; 626 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10020; and the St. Francis Hotel, Post Street, San Francisco, California).

every week or every month. Also, if funds are available, some of the more colourful pictures may be framed and hung on the walls in the classroom. There is always the possibility of making slides from these pictures and showing them - with the appropriate commentary in simple Italian - to the class.

Cartoons

It is surprising that almost every textbook written for Italian contains very little or no humour. Recent books are trying to avoid this but in the meantime, students may be given an introduction to Italian humour by posting carefully-chosen cartoons, comic strips and anecdotes on the bulletin board. Cartoons are extremely useful in the teaching of a language since they may be a source and an aid to stimulate conversation or to provide a point of departure for oral and/or written composition. They may be cut out from newspapers and magazines, mounted on coloured art paper and then posted on the bulletin board for display. If a number of cartoons are available, the teacher may decide to post a different one every day, thus providing "To-day's Smile" in Italian. A part of the bulletin board may be reserved for a section entitled *Sorridiamo in italiano*, *Ridiamo insieme*, *Un po' d'umorismo*, etc. Cartoons may be used:

(a) to provide humour;

(b) to reinforce the teaching of both morphology and syntax;

(c) to teach vocabulary and illustrate idiomatic expressions;

(d) to satirize current or topical news events;

(e) to satirize styles and ways of dressing;

(f) to provide humour on a given theme or topic.

Cartoons whose caption has been deleted will also provide a source for oral or written work.

(g) cartoons may be used for oral testing;

(h) they may be given to students who are asked to provide suitable captions. This should not be too difficult since the cartoon itself will suggest most of the vocabulary. The teacher may decide to post these on the bulletin board as well, thus rewarding the student for his work and encouraging him to continue;

(i) cartoons may be transferred on to a transparency with the original caption on an overlay. The students are curious to compare their caption with the original one provided by the artist;

(j) cartoons with three or more sequential vignettes are ideal for short oral or written compositions. Various approaches might be used. The teacher (i) might ask a series of questions, the answers to which form the basis of the vignette description, (ii) might ask the student to indicate some of the vocabulary and idioms, (iii) might ask the student to give orally the description or (if the teacher wishes to emphasize the writing skill), (iv) might ask the student to

write a twenty-five to thirty-word composition based on the sequence of the vignettes.[7]

Advertisements

Advertisements from current magazines and newspapers may be both entertaining and instructive. They can teach useful modern vocabulary, some of which has not yet appeared in published dictionaries. It is also interesting to note the emphasis in advertising. North America seems to be concerned mainly with deodorant and women's undergarments; Italian interests lie elsewhere. It is amusing to compare the same advertisement which appears in America and in Italy. Do you recall the Esso slogan? The English "put a tiger in your tank" stressed the place where potential strength is to be found; the Italian "metti un tigre nel motore" emphasized where strength is operating. Compare also, for example, the "two-for-one swap *Tide* commerical." In Italy it is *Dash* that is being swapped , but not for a box, but for a *fustino*! If sufficient of these advertisements are posted, the teacher may eventually suggest that each student make up a poster advertising a product of his choice.

But advertisements need not be used only to advertise a product. They may be used to advertise other items and be linked closely with the reading selections of a basic program. For example, several film adver-

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7. For a more comprehensive discussion on the topic, see Anthony Mollica, "Cartoons in the Language Classroom," *The Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes*, 32, 4 (March 1976), 424-444.

tisements can be posted when the teacher is discussing the *lettura* of Lesson 13 in *Basic Italian*, "Andiamo al cinema?" At this point, the teacher can mention the various types of films which the student can see: *film di guerra, di avventure, di spionaggio, di orrore, di fantascienza.* Not to mention that the film may be: *comico, drammatico, giallo, western, musicale, storico.* A variety of exercises can be developed around this topic.

The student may be asked to match Italian titles with English titles - a relatively easy assignment - or he may be required to make up an advertisement for a movie title he has chosen. For a more challenging exercise the student may be asked to narrate the plot of a film he has recently seen or prepare a short written résumé.

Slides

Slides and filmstrips are readily available from many commercial firms in both the United States and Italy. They provide an excellent visual element to the Italian classroom and should be used to emphasize various aspects of Italian life.

(a) Slides may be used to complement a basic language program.

In *Basic Italian* there are many references to Fiesole, Milan, Naples, Capri, Venice, Siena, Pisa, Rome. But the city most emphasized in this text is Florence. The many slides which are readily available for Florence make it possible to prepare short descriptions on its Churches, its monuments, its museums, its paintings - vestiges of an era which made Italy

famous. A guidebook may be a useful source which will assist the teacher greatly in the description of the view presented on the slide.

(b) Slides may be used to develop more fully topics to which only a passing reference has been made.

In *Basic Italian*, the authors refer to the *palio* and yet a full description is never given. The teacher may take the reference as a point of departure and prepare a unit on the *palio*. A similar unit could be developed on "Art in Florence" in which some paintings of both the Uffizi Gallery and Pitti Palace could be shown and discussed. The possibilities for this type of activity are only limited by the number of slides the teacher has or by the number of projects the teacher may wish to have.

(c) Slides may be used to illustrate imaginary tours.

The students may be given a map of Florence (or of any other Italian city) and then be told that the whole class will be taking a sight-seeing tour of that city. With the aid of slides, the teacher (acting as a guide) may describe the various monuments as the bus travels through the city. The teacher may also decide to stop at any given place of interest and with the class tour the interior. To encourage student participation, the teacher may ask three or four students to take turns in being guides for part of the trip. The same procedure can be followed for a "walking tour" and students should be encouraged to "stop" along the way and do some shopping. This latter technique will require more student participation since some will be acting as vendors while others as tourists. It is obvious that students who are involved actively in this presentation will be required to do some advance preparation.

(d) Slides may be used to introduce or recapitulate a reading selection.

Some reading passages in *Basic Italian* lend themselves beautifully for this technique. Examine, for example, the *lettura* of Lesson 24, in which slides can be easily integrated with the reading material.

La Chiesa di Santa Croce

Il professore d'arte ha portato i suoi studenti a visitare la chiesa di Santa Croce. (*Slide: The Church of Santa Croce*) Il professore e gli studenti sono nella grande piazza in cui si trova la chiesa, e il professore ha appena incominiciato a parlare.

Il professore: Sono certo che molti di Loro hanno già veduto questa chiesa, ma non importa. Vi sono delle cose che è bene vedere più di una volta. La chiesa di Santa Croce è una chiesa molta antica. (*Slide: Statue of Dante in front of Church*) Il poeta fiorentino Dante, di cui vediamo la statua in questa piazza, veniva spesso in questa chiesa dove c'erano degli eccellenti Maestri. Naturalmente la chiesa oggi non è come era nel secolo di Dante. Allore era più piccola e più semplice. (*Slide: Interior of Santa Croce*) L'interno della chiesa di Santa Croce è molto bello e importante, (*Slide: Interior of Church, close-up of altar*) non solo artisticamente, ma anche perché vi sono le tombe di molti grandi Italiani: Michelangelo, (*Slide: Tomb of Michelangelo*), Niccolò Machiavelli, (*Slide: Tomb of Machiavelli*), Galileo Galilei, (*Slide: Tomb of Galileo*), Gioacchino Rossini, (*Slide:*

Tomb of Rossini) ecc. C'è anche un cenotafio, (*Slide: cenotaph*) cioè una tomba vuota, in onore di Danta. Nel 1302, quando Dante aveva trentasette anni, andò in esilio, e morì a Ravenna dove è sepolto. Quando Dante lasciò Firenze aveva già scritto molto, ma non aveva ancora finito la *Divina Commedia*. E ora entriamo in Santa Croce dove vedremo le tombe di cui vi ho parlato, e alcuni affreschi di Giotto.

Dopo circa un'ora, il professore e gli studenti escono da Santa Croce. È quasi mezzogiorno, e molti studenti ritornano a casa. Due o tre restano a parlare con il professore. Joan e Jacqueline si avviano verso Piazza del Duomo. Joan dice alla sua amica: "Ma perché non prendiamo il tram? Io sono stanca."

If slides are not used to introduce the *lettura*, they might be used to trigger a series of comprehension questions based on the reading passage. For example,

1. Come si chiama questa chiesa? (*Slide: The Church of Santa Croce*)
2. Di chi è la statua che vediamo davanti alla chiesa? (*Slide: Statue of Dante in front of Church*)
3. Perché è importante l'interno della chiesa? (*Slides: Interior of Santa Croce and close-up*)
4. Quali grandi Italiani vi sono sepolti? (*Slides: Tombs of Michelangelo, Machiavelli, Galileo, Rossini*)

Since reference has been made to Giotto's frescoes, the teacher may take this cue from the line "dopo circa un'ora, il professore a gli studenti escono da Santa Croce," and describe the interior of the church, speak about other famous Italians buried in it such as : Alfieri (*Slide: Tomb of Alfieri*), Foscolo (*Slide: Statue of Foscolo*) and by means of slides describe Giotto's frescoes (*Slides: Giotto's frescoes in the Bardi Chapel*). Again, a guide book will provide brief and useful information which the teacher will relate in Italian which is obviously within the linguistic ability of the student.

Films

The film is, of course, perhaps the best vivid medium of presentation. Theatres showing Italian films are found in many cities where there is a large Italian community. Students should be encouraged to attend such viewings as often as possible. The fact that Italians can laugh at themselves and are able to *castigare ridendo mores* is clearly shown in such films as Germi's *Divorce Italian Style*, *Seduced and Abandoned* or even in his hilariously funny *The Birds, the Bees and the Italians*. Films by De Sica or the early ones by Fellini do give a tremendous insight in Italian mentality and attitude. It is important that at the early stage of their "cultural indoctrination" the students see films which do not present a distorted picture of the Italian people.[8]

8. For a list of films available in both the United States and Canada, see Anthony Mollica, "Audio and Visual Aids for Italian," *Italica*, 51 (Autumn 1974), 353-359.

Magazines and Newspapers

Leading newspapers and magazines also provide cultural content. Samples of editorial writing, feature stories, columns, etc., will, if judiciously chosen, make good reading and become a source of authentic views revealing values and issues of the day. An industrial accident reported in an English newspaper gives a factual account. The same accident reported in an Italian daily would stress the unfortunate, tragic fate of their compatriot. Their report becomes more passionate, more human.[9]

Songs

Songs are also of great help for the acquisition of both linguistic and cultural knowledge.[10] Songs may be sung in the very first Italian class to teach pronunciation and stress. Since a note represents a syllable and since every note must be sung carefully in order to sing in tune, the Italian word cannot be mispronounced. If it is, the student will be singing out of tune. It is important that at the beginning stage, the teacher choose a song whose melody is already familiar to the student. I have tried the method with the well known hit by Frank and Nancy Sinatra, "Somethin' Stupid."

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9. Teachers may wish to examine John A. Rallo, *The Newspaper, Italian Mini-Culture Kit*. Duplicating Masters (Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Co., 1976; in Canada, write to Copp Clark Publishing , Toronto).

10. For a variety of songs, see *Over 100 Italian Songs/Più di 100 canzoni italiane*, ed. by Mary M. Shaw and Guy G. Sciarrillo (Toronto: Maganisa Associates Ltd., 1974).

Qualche stupido "ti amo"

Difficile trovare la maniera di passare la serata con te.
Supponi, per esempio, ce ne andassimo a ballare
Lo sai bene com'è.
Insieme finiremmo per cercare up posto quieto per raccoglierci,
Inevitabilmente finirei con qualche stupido, "Ti amo."

To facilitate the singing, I have played the record twice and on the second time, the class sang along with it. But songs are not only suitable to help teaching pronunciation. They are also useful in presenting scenes which may be peculiar to one's culture. It is interesting to note the similarities and differences of an English popular song such as "Downtown" when such is sung it its Italian version "Ciao, ciao." In the English version, Petula Clark suggests that when you are alone and life is making you lonely, you can always go downtown. It is there that you forget all your troubles. But where do you go if you are in Italy? To the sea, of course, to the beautiful unpolluted beach, where you meet all your friends.

Ciao! Ciao!

Ritorno al mar
dove ho sognato con te
e sembra dirmi:
"Ciao, ciao, ciao."
Rivedo ancor

i vecchi amici che ho
e mi salutano:
"Ciao, ciáo."
E sulla spiaggia limpida
non è cambiato niente
Sotto il sole caldo
io ti cerco tra la gente.
So che ci sei,
Ecco! mi hai vista
e tu mi vieni incontro correndo
e stai sorridendomi:
"Ciao, ciao."
Grido chiamandoti:
"Ciao, ciao."
Amore, abbracciami.
"Ciao, ciao."
Sono tornata da te.
"Ciao, ciao." etc.

A comparative study of the two songs would show that each presents scenes peculiar to one's culture. Songs, then, can be a prime source in pointing out cultural differences to the non-Italian student. In addition to pronunciation and "culture," songs also help effectively to teach comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, colloquial phrases and useful structures.

The teacher might want to keep himself informed as to what songs are among current favourites. There are records, readily available, of various Music Festivals held in Italy. The teacher may eventually also want to teach old favourites which may very well make up a "Musical Tour of Italy." Such favourites as "Piemontesina," "Reginella campagnola," "Arrivederci Roma," "Torna Sorrento," "Chitarra romana," "Firenze," are only a few. Another series of songs may be from "Songs from Italian films." Italians love to sing and it would be a pity to neglect this characteristic from any program.

Cultural readers

General cultural readers for Italian exist on various levels of language difficulty and serve as basic text material for a more or less concentrated treatment of foreign culture. Unfortunately, many such texts tend to draw in a hit and miss fashion upon history, literature, folklore, music, customs, politics, etc. Many are nothing else but a panoramic and encyclopedic representation of the factual data of Italian culture. However, the student cannot fully understand Italian until he knows whom they call their heroes, what they have fought for and what they stand ready to defend again, what accomplishments they prize, and what they consider virtuous, courageous or honourable.

Geography

Teachers may want their students to learn the names of the Italian regions and the names of the *capoluoghi*. A map is ideal for both teaching

and testing. A blank map might be distributed to the students who are then asked to name the cities. The answers might be treated as vocabulary items. The same can be done with the various regions of Italy. Answers can be checked almost immediately after the "test" maps are exchanged for marking. This can easily be done by means of overlays. The map of Italy with its regions and dots indicating the cities should be the basic transparency while the names of regions and the names of cities should be overlays.

The regions and cities may be used as a point of departure to increase the student's vocabulary since, in many cases, to obtain the name of the inhabitants of a region or of a city different suffixes are added. This, too, may be part of the student's learning experience.

Regioni e abitanti

1. Gli abitanti del Piemonte si chiamano.....
2. Gli abitanti della Lombardia si chiamano.....
3. Gli abitanti della Toscana si chiamano.....
4. Gli abitanti degli Abruzzi si chiamano.....
5. Gli abitanti della Calabria si chiamano.....
6. Gli abitanti della Sicilia si chiamano.....

An overlay with the answers will provide a quick check. The same might be done with the cities.

Città e abitanti

1. Gli abitanti di Milano si chiamano.....
2. Gli abitanti di Venezia si chiamano.....
3. Gli abitanti di Firenze si chiamano.....
4. Gli abitanti di Roma si chiamano.....
5. Gli abitanti di Palermo si chiamano.....

For variety, the names of the *abitanti* may be given and the student will be asked to supply the name of the region or of the city.

Abitanti, città e regioni

1. I Piemontesi abitano.....
2. I Milanesi abitano.....
3. I Toscani abitano.....
4. I Napoletani abitano.....
5. Gli Abruzzesi abitano.....
6. I Palermitani abitano.....

Again, an overlay with the answers will provide a quick check. The latter exercise can be assigned during the study of Lesson 15 in *Basic Italian*.

Cultural topics

When the student has reached a good level of mastery in the language, the teacher might assign topics dealing with cultural matters. Here, language is used to acquire information, and the information deals with the target culture.

In his "Teaching Culture in the Foreign Language Classroom," Nelson Brooks proposes a list of matters that appear central and critical in the analysis of a culture. His list is as follows:

1. Symbolism
2. Value
3. Authority
4. Order
5. Ceremony
6. Love
7. Honor

8. Humor
9. Beauty
10. Spirit

"An analysis of *Symbolism*," suggests Brooks, "would tell us not only about a nation's language but also about its literature and art, its myths, its politics, and its religion. Under *Value* we would consider personal preference and rejection, conscience, morality, and philosophy. Under *Authority* we would note whose word is accepted and acted upon at various ages in one's life and in various situations and circumstances. Under *Order* we would study what dispositions there are toward a clear, methodical, and harmonious arrangement of thoughts and things in life of both individual and community. *Ceremony* would focus our attention upon the almost excessive human fondness for elaborate dress and complicated ritual, for congregations great and small, on occasions gay and solemn. And what analysis of culture would be complete without discussing *Love*, whether it be the attachment of parent and child, of husband and wife, the devotion of one friend to another, or the attitude of an individual toward a supreme being? Even if we see in love no more than the reciprocal of aggression, it would appear to merit a place in our list. Under *Honor* we would consider the high standards of personal conduct that give evidence of our attitude toward ourselves, our families, our friends, our country. Under *Humor* we would note not only how important and popular is the sense of what is witty, comic, and laughable, but also what is found to be humorous and how this varies from one age group to another and from one culture to another. Under *Beauty* we would seek for and describe in

the products of man's brain and hand that which is over and above the practical and the utilitarian, and marks a striving toward innovation and perfection, and is an indication of the esthetic sense which man is motivated to express. Finally, under *Spirit* our attention would be turned upon the evidence of man's awareness of himself as man, the special human capacity whereby his thoughts may range in time and space far from the situation in which he finds himself, contemplating both reality and non-reality, and permitting him to pursue the eternal quest of what it is that he is."[11]

According to Postman and Weingartner, "In the learning environment, there are at least four critical elements: the learner, the teacher, the 'to-be-learned', and the strategies for learning. For this environment to fulfil its function, these elements must serve, complement, and derive meaning from each other."[12] What the teacher is really trying to uncover is the language-learning environment which makes the language classroom different from other classrooms in the school. H. W. Magoun gives a clue as to what this might be: "In our sense organs - eyes, ears and so on - we possess the most beautifully controlled, delicate and effective access to the brain. If we want to change a brain, we can best do it through our natural senses. That is what we *are* doing every day, what society

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11. Nelson Brooks, "Teaching Culture in the Foreign Language Classroom," *Foreign Language Annals*, 1, No. 3 (March 1968), 204-217.

12. N. Postman and C. Weingartner, *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* New York: Delta-Dell, 1969), pp. 51-52.

has always done. The puzzle is how to do it better."[13]

The Italian language program surely has to allow the student not only to discover language facts, but also to soak up some of the feelings, the sounds, the sights and the smells which accompany them. This is what gives language some element of reality, of life; this is what makes it enjoyable and meaningful to learn. It is easy for any teacher to become overconfident with a good enrolment in the first year. But how many students stay in the same course in the second and subsequent years? I am firmly convinced that one of the aims of the first year program should be to develop a positive attitude for the study of Italian and the culture it reflects. The study of Italian should make the student realize that there are many ways of looking at things, and that differences do not necessarily represent moral issues of right and wrong. Through the study of Italian, we hope that the student will develop tolerance of other view points and will become aware of other forms of behaviour as well as become more conscious of his own.

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13. H. W. Magoun in *Education and Ecstacy*, ed. G. B. Leonard (New York: Delacorte, 1968), p. 34.